

San Francisco Workers' School

The **San Francisco Workers' School** was an ideological training center of the **Communist Party USA** (CPUSA) established in **San Francisco** for adult education in 1934. "It was a typical specimen of a Communist school, such as would come under investigation by federal and state authorities for decades afterward."^[1] in the 1940, it emerged as the **California Labor School**.

1 History

In 1934, Anita Whitney, Samuel Adams Darcy, Benjamin Ellisberg, Lincoln Steffens, and Steffens' wife Ella Winter supported the establishment of the San Francisco Worker's School, housed at CPUSA headquarters at 121 Haight Street in San Francisco.^[1]

The school drew inspiration from the **Jack London Memorial Institute** (founded 1917^[2]).

2 Organization

Like similar workers' schools in **New York** and Chicago, it held classes at night (after normal work hours) and taught the basics of **Communism**.^[1]

2.1 Administrators

(forthcoming)

2.2 Advisory Board

According to **Tenney** Committee report of 1947,^[3] the following people served on an advisory board for the school:

- **Langston Hughes**
- **Lincoln Steffens**
- **Anita Whitney**

2.3 Teachers

According to Stephen Schwartz,^[1] the following people taught at the school:

- **Kenneth Rexroth** - Art
- **Samuel Adams Darcy** - unknown
- **Elaine Black** - unknown
- **Karl Hama** (Party name for **Goso Yoneda**) - unknown
- **Sam Goodwin** - unknown
- **Louise Todd Lambert** - unknown

2.4 Courses

According to Stephen Schwartz,^[1] the following courses were taught at the school:

- Principles of Communism
- Marxian Economics
- National and Colonial Problems
- History of the Social and Communist Movements
- Self-Defense in Courts (4-session)
- Organizing the Working Class (only for CPUSA and YCL members)

2.5 Publications

The school published a journal called *Writers' Workshop*, edited by activist, novelist, historian **Alexander Saxton**.^{[4][5]}

3 Impact

(forthcoming)

4 Legacy

"The early San Francisco Workers School morphed into the Tom Mooney School, and then reappeared as CLS" (the **California Labor School**).^[5]

5 See also

- Rand School of Social Science (1906)
- Work People's College (1907)
- Brookwood Labor College (1921)
- New York Workers School (1923)
- New Workers School (1929)
- Highlander Research and Education Center (formerly Highlander Folk School) (1932)
- California Labor School (formerly Tom Mooney Labor School) (1942)
- Jefferson School of Social Science (1944)
- Continuing education
- Los Angeles People's Education Center^[6]

6 Footnotes

- [1] Schwartz, Stephen (1998). *From West to East: California and the Making of the American Mind*. New York: Free Press. pp. 238–239. ISBN 0-684-83134-1. Retrieved 10 July 2016.
- [2] Sherman, Joan R. (1977). *Jack London: A Reference Guide*. G. K. Hall. p. xiii. Retrieved 10 July 2016.
- [3] Bosmajian, Haig A. (2010). *Anita Whitney, Louis Brandeis, and the First Amendment*. Fairleigh Dickinson University Press. p. 150. Retrieved 10 July 2016.
- [4] Wald, Alan (1994). *Writing from the Left: New Essays on Radical Culture and Politics*. Verso. p. 91. Retrieved 10 July 2016.
- [5] Gettleman, Marvin E. (2008). "Defending Left Pedagogy: U.S. Communist Schools Fight Back Against the SACB . . . and Lose (1953-1957)". *Reconstruction*. Retrieved 10 July 2016.
- [6] "Re: Workmen's Educational Association - San Francisco". H-LABOR@H-NET.MSU.EDU. 26 July 2000. Retrieved 7 February 2016.

7 Further reading

- Gettleman, Marvin E. (2008). "Defending Left Pedagogy: U.S. Communist Schools Fight Back Against the SACB . . . and Lose (1953-1957)". *Reconstruction*. Retrieved 10 July 2016.
- Schwartz, Stephen (1998). *From West to East: California and the Making of the American Mind*. New York: Free Press. pp. 238–239. ISBN 0-684-83134-1. Retrieved 10 July 2016.

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